



SPREAD

FEBRUARY 2013

From the Chairman—Tony Thompson

At times in our lives, it is good to be able to meet with others who: share the same faith; are committed to the same vision; encounter similar problems; face the challenges that we face; and are willing and able to share their knowledge and experience with us. Such times of coming together often encourage and equip us for the work to which God has called us. In recent months, many of our partners and colleagues in TEE*/SEAN** have had the opportunity to meet together in conferences and training events. In this edition of SPREAD, we report on these 'encounters' and their impact.

Tony Thompson

*Theological Education by Extension **Study by Extension for All Nations



'Laying A Good Foundation' Central Asia Conference – October 2012 – Kyrgyzstan

SEAN continues to spread across the churches in Central Asian countries that were once part of the USSR. In that region there is a big need in both basic theological education and training of church leaders "on the field". The number of new Christians continues to grow there, especially amongst the ethnic people, while the migration out of that region affects the number of trained church leaders. SEAN seems to be just the tool to equip and empower the new believers and strengthen the churches in Central Asia who experience continuous persecution and economic hardships



Autumn at Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan.

The *Laying a Good Foundation* conference was organized in Kyrgyzstan on the beautiful banks of the famous Issyk-Kul Lake for about 30 church leaders from Central Asian countries with a vision of helping to establish national teams in each country and to build a partnership for future work. The participants received training in different aspects of work from translation and contextualization to tutor training and administrative issues. An important part of training was practising SEAN group discussions.

The teaching was done by experienced teachers from Nepal, Mongolia, UK, Netherlands, Russia and Kyrgyzstan. In the evenings there were country presentations followed by prayers. Several times tears were shed when the stories of persecution and hardships were told. There was an amazing atmosphere of Christian love and unity in the Lord.

After the conference the participants went back to their countries with a vision to share with others what they learnt at the conference.

News continues to arrive about new SEAN groups starting after the conference and more churches hearing about SEAN. Please, pray that God will protect this work and help the national teams to fulfil their vision.

Note: We are very grateful to Annetta Vyssotskaia for this article. Annetta is Russian and, with her husband and children, lives in New Zealand. From time to time, she makes the long journey into Russia and Central Asia to encourage, support, and help train those who use the SEAN Courses and method in their churches and regions. Her ministry and leadership is much appreciated and valued by many in Asia and beyond. Here she is in Seoul, South Korea, with Stephen Cho, Director of TEE Korea. (We have carried several stories of TEE Korea in previous editions of SPREAD)



Testimonies

Note: These testimonies reflect the experience of church leaders who learned about, and studied, SEAN material at the Central Asia Conference. Names and locations have been omitted for security reasons.

"I thank God for these wonderful programmes through which I saw an opportunity for a deeper study of God's Word. The Word of God became more open to me through meditating on it and preparing homework where everything is so clearly formulated and presented in such a way that you think that it was personally revealed to you.

This programme helped me to see the gaps in my knowledge in some areas, gave me hope for further spiritual growth, and the desire to share this knowledge with others. We will surely use this material in our church by starting groups for studying the Word of God to fill in the gaps where we did not have a good foundation and to change the church. I thank you from all my heart for your wonderful work" (V., church pastor)

"I thank God for you and this programme and the balanced teaching. I believe that thanks to this programme it is possible to lay a solid foundation and to provide the spiritual growth of new converts and church members. I want to speak about this programme at the pastors' council so that other churches can start using it too" (N., church pastor, coordinator of a church TEE programme)

"This teaching helped me a lot in building the "missing steps of the ladder" (like on a picture you showed us at the seminar [See Note below](#)) because my theological education before that was more like the upper steps of that ladder and there was still a lot of chaos and not much depth in it.

We do need this TEE method to put everything in order in our heads (to add and fill in all the gaps in our knowledge and understanding of the Bible) and after that to be able to teach others!" (V., church elder)

Note: Here is the picture referred to. It illustrates the fact that, for many people, trying to study some courses is like trying to climb a ladder that has the lower rungs missing. SEAN Courses were specifically designed to put in the missing rungs so that even those with only basic education could start to climb the 'ladder of learning'.



Hispanic Conference - September 2012



As reported in our last edition of SPREAD our Hispanic Conference, in Buenos Aires in September 2012, brought together leaders of TEE/SEAN programmes from right across Latin America, the USA and the UK.

Some of the training programmes represented were large and well-established, often with hundreds or even thousands of students. Others, although smaller, still gave testimony to lives changed, leaders trained and churches planted. We heard of SEAN Courses operating in situations of poverty, communal violence, conflict zones, prisons, and amongst those holding public office. We could only praise God at what is being done through these simple but profound courses used by our committed and dedicated partners.

Terry Barratt (Director, SEAN International with, L to R, Neptalí Cuellar (Director, SETA, Bolivia), Milton Aranciba, (Dean, SETA), Silvia Bravo (Administrator, SETA), and one cute little girl!

Hispanic Conference continued

An exciting development during the conference was a commitment, on the part of those present, to come together at some future date with a view to developing co-operation and communication on a number of fronts. Here are just three of their aims:-

1. To set up an active communication network between the organisations that use SEAN material in Latin America and the USA.
2. Consider the different ways in which academic accreditation exists across this fraternal network.
3. Evaluate the way in which, in the training programmes across the region, courses from other sources are used alongside those produced by SEAN.



Ubaldo Restán (Director CIPEP, Colombia) with Tony Thompson (Chairman SEAN International)



Marlen Benavides (Administrator – SEAN Costa Rica) and Delis Pernett (Recently returned to Colombia from Mozambique where she had been serving as a missionary with DIGNIDAD, Spain)



Nick Beezhold (Director of 'Partners in Christ International', USA). PICI handles sales for SEAN in the USA.



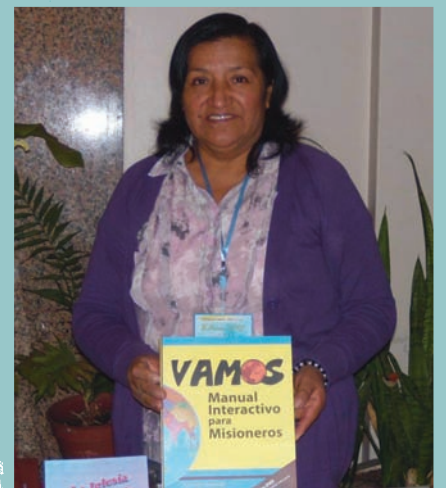
Display of various course books (CIPEP, Colombia)



L to R: Norberto Saracco (Director FLET, Argentina), José Wojnariowicz (FIET, Uruguay), Jesús Martínez (Director, SEMILLAS, Mexico), Javier Suarez (Administrator, SEMILLAS, Mexico), Nubia Rodríguez (SEAN Nicaragua).



Luciano Ferreira (Director of FLET, Paraguay with Phil Tadman, (Treasurer of SEAN International)



Gloria Chavez (Director ETE, Perú)

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Liberia Conference – December 2012

Our SEAN partner in Liberia, West Africa, is the Christian Bible Church Mission International.

There are six local churches in the CBMI grouping. The Revd Philip Boimah is President of this group and also heads up the SEAN

Programme in Liberia. We are very grateful to him for supplying us with the following news, photos, and testimony. This was not an easy task as his computer was infected by a virus so all information had to be sent by mobile phone!



Altogether over one hundred attended the conference, including some from Guinea. The programme included fellowship, business, strategic planning and teaching. During the conference, thirteen people were baptised into the Christian faith.

These photos give an insight into the location and the activities.

Testimony



Pastor A. Fasu Kona Kona (see photo) writes...

I am pleased to testify the good work of SEAN INTERNATIONAL in my life, It all begin last 2010 when I was asked to attend the school. At that time I was also asked to take care of a congregation, I begin to ask myself what will I say to Gods people, I know how to read, but I can't understand what I read, but I pray to make use of the opportunity becoming SEAN STUDENT.

Today I thank God that SEAN have place me in new position of understanding, I can now be call pastor. It was in my church the conference was held.

Thank God for you all, our President Philip and Gloria are asking me to start one class in our church. They will do the teaching. What a great blessing for us from a muslim community, he from that background. Praise God.

Thanks

Footnote As we go to press, several students are preparing to take their 'Abundant Life' exam.

Courses

For courses in US English, + other languages, contact SEAN International at: contact@seaninternational.com

For courses in UK English, contact SEAN UK at: admin@sean.uk.net

Websites

www.seaninternational.com (English & Spanish)
www.sean.uk.net (English)

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